

bring, over the course of an hour, a little brighter perspective, a little more upbeat perspective, a little more optimistic perspective, and, hopefully, a little more truthful perspective because so often what happens on the floor of this House during the course of our debates is that the truth tends to be swept away. And, again, that frustrates our constituents. It frustrates my constituents, I know, when they ask why we can't stick to the facts, stick to reason as we try to solve the significant challenges that confront us as a Nation.

I have a number of favorite quotes. One of them is this one from the late United States Senator from New York, Daniel Patrick Moynihan. He said, famously, "Everyone is entitled to their own opinion, but they are not entitled to their own facts." Another one of my favorite quotes is "Imitation is the most sincere form of flattery." So I was so pleased when I heard either the Speaker or the majority leader say just this in a debate recently, and I would ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to heed this. Everyone's entitled to their own opinion, and you ought to state so, and that's appropriate. But you're not entitled to your own facts.

So tonight, Mr. Speaker, we're going to share a few facts with our colleagues, and I am going to start by bringing a couple of quotes from a true American institution. Certainly the "Tonight Show" is an American institution. The current host of the "Tonight Show," Jay Leno, oftentimes crystallizes in just a very humorous way what the American people are thinking. So I thought it would be appropriate to share with our colleagues, Mr. Speaker, what Jay Leno has said over the past couple of days. This is about the state of Congress right now. As you know, Mr. Speaker, the numbers for Congress aren't great right now. I would again encourage my colleagues to try to use the sense of what the American people are saying as a positive impetus to have us move forward together in a commonsense, positive, upbeat, principled way that reflects the will of our Nation.

But Jay Leno said the other day, "And our new Democratic Congress, remember, they promised longer workweeks. Well, now they announced they're going to a 4-day workweek. I guess they realized they don't need a full 5 days to do nothing." It was alluding to the fact that really not much has gotten done in these first 10 months of this 110th Congress under the new leadership. And it hasn't for a variety of reasons. We will talk a little bit about that tonight. But I would suggest most clearly, Mr. Speaker, that it hasn't because this new majority seems to be unwilling to work together on behalf of the American people. SCHIP is a classic example, and our colleagues mentioned that, and we will talk a little bit about that tonight.

Jay Leno also said just 2 days ago, "The Democrats in Congress have an-

nounced they will now be taking Fridays off. Apparently they were getting worried their approval rating was getting too high." As I mentioned, Mr. Speaker, the approval rating for Congress is not great.

And that troubles me. It should trouble all of us. It troubles me because I think that what the American people are seeing when they look here to Washington, when they look to the Speaker and to the leaders that are running this Congress, they see an institution and they see a group of leaders who are not willing to work with each other. And for those of us who are less than senior Members, certainly in the minority party at this time, it is very distressing because we came here, all of us came here, to solve problems. I oftentimes encourage my colleagues to go back and read their first piece of campaign literature in their first campaign because I think, Mr. Speaker, that speaks to the goals and the vision and the dreams that we all had when we came to Congress.

But as you know, Mr. Speaker, a recent Zogby poll found that for the second month in a row, this Democrat-led Congress's approval rating was 11 percent. Now, why is that? Well, I think if you look at the bills that have been passed through this Congress and signed into law, there have been 107 of them so far, Mr. Speaker, 107 bills. Now, you might think that that would be a grand accomplishment, and I suspect that it is on one measure. This new majority touted the fact that they have had over a thousand votes. What they didn't say is that the vast majority of those were procedural votes. They were determining how the bills ought to move forward, oftentimes in significantly noninclusive ways. But 107 bills have gone through the House and the Senate and signed into law by the President. So I thought it would be helpful to kind of break down those 107 bills. What were they? Were they wonderful solutions, as have been proposed, to children's health insurance? Were they wonderful solutions to health system reform? As a physician myself, I believe so strongly that we need significant, positive, patient-centered health system reform.

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Was that one of the bills that was signed? Was controlling the crisis that we have in the area of illegal immigration, was that one of the bills? Well, regretfully, Mr. Speaker, as you well know, it wasn't.

In fact, of 107 bills signed into law, 47 of those bills named post offices, courthouses or roads. Now, those are important things to do, and certainly when we name and honor individuals with the naming of a post office or a courthouse or a road, that's an important thing to do, but it ought not be something that the majority party brings forward and champions as a grand accomplishment. I haven't looked at what the votes were on those 47 bills,

but I suspect that, by and large, they were unanimous. I will just take a wild guess, Mr. Speaker; I suspect that the vast majority of those were unanimous.

So, 47 of the 107 bills signed into law were naming post offices or roads or courthouses. Forty-four of the bills were noncontroversial measures that were either sponsored by Republicans or they passed overwhelmingly. And those are the kind of routine things that you've just got to do to keep the trains running on time here.

So, 47 naming post offices or other buildings; 44 were noncontroversial. Fourteen of the remaining 16 were to extend preexisting laws or laws that had been passed during the Republican-led Congress. Now, that means that there were only two left out of that whole 107 bills that were signed into law. In fact, I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that these were the two most important bills. One of them was the extension of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, and we'll talk a little bit about that. But to keep our Nation safe, one of them was that bill. That passed. But as I note, Mr. Speaker, that passed over the objection of the leadership of the Democrat Party.

So, one of the most important things we've done, in fact, probably one of the two most important things that we've done, passed over the objection of the leadership of the Democrat Party, the majority party. The other bill that passed was the supplemental to provide appropriate resources for our troops.

So, Mr. Speaker, not an opinion, but a fact is that we have, yes, we have, indeed, had over 1,000 votes. And the majority party is very proud of that, and maybe they should be. But when you look at the number of bills that have passed Congress, 107, 47 of those were to name post offices or buildings, 44 were noncontroversial, 14 were to continue previous law, and two, the two most important, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act and the appropriate resources for our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, passed over the objection and the vote of the majority leadership, the majority of the majority leadership.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure that's something to champion, but I will tell you that I believe that's part of the reason that the American people say, "What's going on? What's going on up there in Washington? Can you all please work together on behalf of the American people?" which is what I believe and my colleagues, I know, believe we ought to do. In fact, many of those things would be very, very humorous if they weren't so doggone serious. We are in challenging times, Mr. Speaker, and I would suggest and encourage my colleagues, frankly, on both sides of the aisle to put positive issues out there and work together as we move forward.

One of the bills that we heard from our good friends on was the SCHIP bill, the State Children's Health Insurance